

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A rotary lawn mower comprising:
 - a frame supported by front wheels and at least one rear wheel for movement over the ground;
 - at least one rotary cutting deck assembly; and
 - a lifting system coupling said at least one rotary cutting deck assembly to said frame, said lifting system operable to lift and pivot said at least one rotary cutting deck assembly about a generally vertical axis between a first position generally below said frame and a second position generally to a side of said frame.
2. The rotary lawn mower according to Claim 1 wherein said lifting system comprises:
 - a support bracket assembly pivotally coupled to said frame for movement about said generally vertical axis;
 - a telescoping arm pivotally coupled between said support bracket assembly and said at least one rotary cutting deck assembly; and
 - an actuator pivotally coupled between said support bracket assembly and said telescoping arm, said actuator operable to move said at least one rotary cutting deck assembly between a non-cutting position and a cutting position.

3. The rotary lawn mower according to Claim 2 wherein said support bracket assembly comprises:

a pivot bracket fixedly mounted to said frame, said pivot bracket having a sleeve;

a first pivot member having a pivot pin downwardly extending therefrom, said pivot pin being disposed within said sleeve of said pivot bracket, said first pivot member supporting said actuator;

a second pivot member having a sleeve, said second pivot member receiving said pivot pin extending from said pivot bracket, said second pivot member supporting said telescoping arm; and

a locking device retaining said pivot bracket, first pivot member, and second pivot member in an assembled configuration.

4. The rotary lawn mower according to Claim 3 wherein said actuator is mountable to said first pivot member in a first location and a second location, said second location being spaced apart from said first location.

5. The rotary lawn mower according to Claim 4 wherein when said actuator is mounted in said first location, said at least one rotary cutting deck assembly may be positioned in either of said cutting position and said non-cutting position, when said actuator is mounted in said second position, said at least one rotary cutting deck assembly may be positioned in either a position generally under said frame or a swung out position generally to a side of said frame to permit convenient access to said at least one rotary cutting deck assembly.

6. The rotary lawn mower according to Claim 2 wherein said telescoping arm comprises:

an inner rod pivotally coupled to said support bracket assembly;

an outer tube slidably disposed over at least a portion of said inner rod for slidable engagement therewith; and

a locking device operable to selectively prevent relative movement between said inner rod and said outer tube.

7. The rotary lawn mower according to Claim 6, said telescoping arm further comprising:

a pivot pin extending from said outer tube, said pivot pin being generally coaxial with said outer tube, said pivot pin engagable with a sleeve mounted on said at least one rotary cutting deck assembly to permit rotation thereof.

8. A rotary lawn mower comprising:
 - a frame supported by a plurality of wheels for movement over the ground;
 - a rotary cutting deck assembly;
 - a support bracket assembly pivotally coupled to said frame for movement about a generally vertical axis;
 - a telescoping arm pivotally coupled between said support bracket assembly and said rotary cutting deck assembly, said telescoping arm being adjustable into at least two lengths; and
 - an actuator pivotally coupled between said support bracket assembly and said telescoping arm, said actuator operable to move said rotary cutting deck assembly between a non-cutting position and a cutting position and further capable of retracting said telescoping arm between said at least two lengths.

9. The rotary lawn mower according to Claim 8 wherein said support bracket assembly comprises:

a pivot bracket fixedly mounted to said frame, said pivot bracket having a sleeve;

a first pivot member having a pivot pin downwardly extending therefrom, said pivot pin being disposed within said sleeve of said pivot bracket, said first pivot member supporting said actuator;

a second pivot member having a sleeve, said second pivot member receiving said pivot pin extending from said pivot bracket, said second pivot member supporting said telescoping arm; and

a locking device retaining said pivot bracket, first pivot member, and second pivot member in an assembled configuration.

10. The rotary lawn mower according to Claim 9 wherein said actuator is mountable to said first pivot member in a first location and a second location, said second location being spaced apart from said first location.

11. The rotary lawn mower according to Claim 10 wherein when said actuator is mounted in said first location said rotary cutting deck assembly may be positioned in either of said cutting position and said non-cutting position, when said actuator is mounted in said second position said rotary cutting deck assembly may be positioned in either a position generally under said frame or a swung out position generally to a side of said frame to permit convenient access to said rotary cutting deck assembly.

12. The rotary lawn mower according to Claim 11 wherein said telescoping arm comprises:

an inner rod pivotally coupled to said support bracket assembly;

an outer tube slidably disposed over at least a portion of said inner rod for slidable engagement therewith; and

a locking device operable to selectively prevent relative movement between said inner rod and said outer tube.

13. The rotary lawn mower according to Claim 12, said telescoping arm further comprising:

a pivot pin extending from said outer tube, said pivot pin being generally coaxial with said outer tube, said pivot pin engagable with a sleeve mounted on said rotary cutting deck assembly to permit rotation thereof.

14. A rotary lawn mower comprising:
 - a frame supported by a plurality of wheels for movement over the ground;
 - a rotary cutting deck assembly;
 - a pivot bracket fixedly mounted to said frame, said pivot bracket having a sleeve;
 - a first pivot member having a pivot pin downwardly extending therefrom, said pivot pin being disposed within said sleeve of said pivot bracket, said first pivot member supporting said actuator;
 - a second pivot member having a sleeve, said second pivot member receiving said pivot pin extending from said pivot bracket, said second pivot member supporting said telescoping arm;
 - a locking device retaining said pivot bracket, first pivot member, and second pivot member in an assembled configuration;
 - a telescoping arm pivotally coupled between said second pivot member and said rotary cutting deck assembly; and
 - an actuator pivotally coupled between said first pivot member and said telescoping arm, said actuator operable to move said rotary cutting deck assembly between a non-cutting position and a cutting position and further capable of retracting said telescoping arm to permit said rotary cutting deck to be swung to a side of said frame.

15. The rotary lawn mower according to Claim 14 wherein said actuator is mountable to said first pivot member in a first location and a second location, said second location being spaced apart from said first location.

16. The rotary lawn mower according to Claim 15 wherein when said actuator is mounted in said first location said rotary cutting deck assembly may be positioned in either of said cutting position and said non-cutting position, and when said actuator is mounted in said second position said rotary cutting deck assembly may be positioned in either a position generally under said frame or a swung out position generally to a side of said frame to permit convenient access to said rotary cutting deck assembly.

17. The rotary lawn mower according to Claim 14 wherein said telescoping arm comprises:

- an inner rod pivotally coupled to said second pivot member;
- an outer tube slidably disposed over at least a portion of said inner rod for slidable engagement therewith; and
- a locking device operable to selectively prevent relative movement between said inner rod and said outer tube.

18. The rotary lawn mower according to Claim 17, said telescoping arm further comprising:

a pivot pin extending from said outer tube, said pivot pin being generally coaxial with said outer tube, said pivot pin engagable with a sleeve mounted on said rotary cutting deck assembly to permit rotation thereof.